

**THE THESIS OF DOCTORAL
DISSERTATION**

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Guild – Craft Union – Co-operative

Social Changes and Transformation of Work

Organisation in Footwear-Production in Endrőd

UNIVERSITY OF DEBRECEN, FACULTY OF ARTS

2008

1. The objectives of the dissertation, circumscription of the topic

The analysis of rural crafts is a current issue due to changes in vocational training and included in this, the decline of education concerning small-scale industry. The deeper analysis and synthesis of different professions contribute to the understanding of the problems of small-scale industry, functioning as enterprise and reviving in the years of change. The analytic, discovery craft research, applying scientific methods and quality may provide basis for the settling of problems in the vocational training, organised on a new basis nowadays.

The archival researches based on historic sources mostly cover the guild period and only few dared reveal the era of craft-unions and the following co-operative changes.

The research of disappearing handicrafts is an urgent matter, as the people, educated and active in the time of small-scale industry (until the first third of the 20th century) are ageing and dying. Due to changes in lifestyle several crafts (weaver, wheelwright, harness-maker, boot-maker) looking back upon a historic past have disappeared from the rural handicrafts in the 1950s and 1960s; moreover the crafts of smiths, tailors and shoemakers have also started to disappear.

In my dissertation, using the results of national craft research, I present the social changes and the changes in work organisation concerning footwear-making industry through the changes of footwear-making industry in Endrőd (Gyomaendrőd, Békés County).

My aim with the interpretation of the disclosed processes is the circumscription of local social roles concerning footwear-making being a domestic industry at the beginning and changing to be an independent rural small-scale industry. I also try to reveal the stabile and instable elements in the change of educational systems, typify the connection of working place and employee, and last but not least to prove the continuous presence of traditional work organisation, which is characteristic of handicrafts. I also aim to present and interpret the apprentice training, production, working place organisation, marketing processes organised by means of family relations among the participants of footwear-making industry.

The boot- and shoe-making industry of Endrőd is a good example to represent the development of footwear-making industry as we can study the move of small-scale industry, organised on guild basis into a co-operative form and later the functioning system of shoe-making small businesses. The example of Endrőd is even more tinged, as the settlement – as opposed to neighbouring villages – is a strong agrarian place, which is religiously closed. This results in a reserve, which can also be traced in the society of craftsmen. The fertility of the Catholic population resulted in a layer of agrarian proletarians, which had strong connections – concerning footwear-making industry – with the craftsmen – a close relation between the two social segments. The footwear-making small-scale industry in Endrőd, presented as an example was a determining means of subsistence in the settlement in the 20th century.

From the turn of the 19th-20th centuries till the year 2000 the footwear-making industry (small-scale industry – co-operative industry) of Endrőd was a significant part of the national shoe-making industry. In the work-organisation of the first co-operatives, built on the traditions of small-scale industry the verlag-system of product manufacturing can be traced – this system evolved in the golden age of marketing (1934-1945) and resulted in the division of labour of outworkers, rising around the greater workshops. At the beginning, the socialist co-operative was not different from the artisans' co-operative, only the material-purchase, production and marketing were separated. By mechanization the footwear-making work, place of work and organisation of work changed.

Although the topic can be examined from several perspectives: e. g. history or industrial history, I applied ethnographic methods during the research work, as I did not aim to reveal the technique history of the object but the phenomena characterising the footwear-making craftsmen inside rural society and among other craftsmen.

1. The applied methods

The research program embraces six years of intensive field work and processing. In the early stage of research I circumscribed the group which can give information about the local (Endrőd) footwear-making. There were separate groups for those, working inside the craft and for those having contact with the profession from the outside (family members, neighbours, customers). I compared the collected data from the two groups and

drew conclusions on the basis of the information. In the first stage of research I studied the scientific literature about the topic, which revealed the results and mistakes of the previous research works. Objects and documents in museums provided a separate source.

1.1 Concepts

With the scholarly quality in mind I have to clear up the meaning of concepts, used in the dissertation.

- a) Under the term *the organisational form of footwear-making industry* I mean those organisations that safeguard the interests of craftsmen, emerging in the guild period and always functioning as interest-safeguarding organisations in later times for the members. These organisational forms determined the means of production and even the lifestyle of craftsmen.
- b) *Training* is the education of the apprentice till the acquisition of master grade. I also include the training in the era of small-scale industry, based on guild traditions and the vocational training in the co-operative era.
- c) *The society of craftsmen*: is the group of 1st-2nd-3rd -generation artisan families, constituting a separate group inside the settlement's society.
- d) *Work organisation* covers the means of production used in workshops and factories.
- e) Footwear-making is a rural small-scale industry, a *craft*. I do not apply the Bátky-system¹, which designates the rural crafts as artisan trades. The reason for this is the fact that footwear-making does without the use of machines, so it has remained in the group of handicrafts.

1.2 Methods of research

My research rests on four pillars:

- a) Collection of data from the scientific literature
- b) Research of archival sources
- c) Analysis of museum sources (objects, documents)
- d) Field work

¹ BÁTKY Zsigmond 1937. 305.

The interpretation of sources was carried out by means of scientific methods. I aimed to have the primary sources as the basis of the dissertation, so besides the already found archival information I also made statistical studies as an addition.

The formation and later the operation of footwear-making crafts in the guild period were presented by archival, historic and ethnographic research (the latter emerging in the last 20 years). Significant results of research concerning the history of footwear were presented by Mária Kresz, Alice Gáborján and Mária Flórián.² The creation and the continuous enlargement of the Hungarian guild cadastre, coordinated by the MTA VEAB Craft History Committee is a milestone.

The archival research resulted in an additional material, so far unknown for researchers, being a great help in the determination of the significance and development of footwear industry in Endrőd.

I divided the archival material into two groups:

- The documents of organisations (guild privileges, certificates of mastership, documents of crafts-union and trade associations; co-operative material)
- The documents outside the organisations (formal and informal letters, protocollums, ecclesiastical documents, family photos)

Concerning the collections of museums, I focused on settlements, being part of the trading route (Gyomaendrőd, Szarvas, Mezőtúr, Békés, Dévaványa, Szeghalom). In the museums, I examined the material in close connection with footwear-making, both objects and documents. The objects and the related documents of the Tessedik Sámuel Museum, in Szarvas gave very important information, helped in answering some of the uncertain questions of the research, carried out in Endrőd in connection with the guilds and the wanderings of the journeymen.

With the help of ethnographic interviews I managed to record significant data and moments of life, as I had the opportunity to record interviews in the first third of my research, and was able to talk to several older boot-makers, living in the settlement. They

² Mária Kresz: Magyar parasztviselet (1820-1867). Budapest, 1955. 42-44pp.; Alice GÁBORJÁN: A szolnoki hódoltság kori ásatási lábbeli anyag viselettörténeti vonatkozásai. In: Ortutay Gyula (szerk.), ETHNOGRAPHIA LXVIII. Szám, 1956. 543-574.; Két magyar hosszú lábbeli típus viselettörténeti elemzése. In: Szolnoky Lajos (szerk.), NÉPRAJZI ÉRTESÍTŐ XL szám, 1957. 37-82.pp.; Mária FLÓRIÁN: Az Mester Emberek Míveinek árazása. Tímárok, kordovánosok és irhások, bocskorosok, magyar és német vargák, csizmadiák és kapcakötők árszabásai. Budapest, 1999. 352-353.pp.; 355. pp.; 359.

were active in the period of small-scale industry and were descendants of boot-maker dynasties and therefore could give authentic information about the times of their parents and grandparents. The documents preserved in family archives enriched the research with useful information. Exploiting my personal involvement I tried to interpret the topic of my research both from the outside and from the inside. I partially applied the method of participant observation. Growing up in a shoe-maker's family helped a lot, as most of the tools and processes were already known for me. My work was made easier by the fact that the informants told the story of their life, in several cases full of very personal aspects to the descendant of their fellow artisan in deep interviews.

2. The results of research

The research project, spanning a great interval revealed the changes in work organisation concerning the footwear-making industry of Endrőd, in Békés County. The production forms (guild, small-scale industry, co-operative, small business) built on each other clearly reflect the stabile and instable elements inside the profession. The transformation of the social base can be traced in the footwear making industry from the turn of the 19th-20th centuries – a change characteristic in the whole century.

2.1 The preservation of guild traditions

The research disclosed the process changes beginning from the guild period till the times of small business, organised after the change of regime (till the year 2000). It proved true, that till the formation of the socialist co-operative elements of guild traditions are demonstrable in the case of footwear-makers of Endrőd:

- a) hierarchy in profession, which reinforced the leading authority of the senior master
- b) dynasty character of the profession
- c) basic elements of apprentice education
- d) plan and method of work concerning footwear-making
- e) marriage endogamy among the members of this profession
- f) the religious activity of the craftsmen's association

Till the mechanization of footwear making, due to the working methods the elements from the guild period can be traced. The reason for this can be found in the conservation of technology concerning the production process. At the emergence of co-operatives this method of work is still characteristic disappearing only when the modern methods of socialist co-operatives were introduced. The elements of the guild period vanished when the boot-makers were unable to respond to the changes of market demands and technology.

In the period following the change of regime a layer of shoe-makers evolved strongly connected to the socialist co-operative, hardly preserving any guild traditions. The revival of traditions of small-scale industry, including conserved elements of guild traditions can only be found in the case of small business, built on dynastic traditions.

2.2 The social base of footwear makers and the reasons for changes

2.2.1 The period of small-scale industry

A significant factor influencing the stratification of artisan society is the measure with which they could move away from the social group they were descended from.

Most of the first-generation craftsmen returned to peasant way of life and in labelling the work place of their craft peasant designations were abundant. The existence of double farming is also continuous in the case of footwear producers of Endrőd. Poorer craftsmen took turns at working in the craft or in agriculture, but the richer also bought land to lend. Professional marriage endogamy influenced the work organisation of the footwear-making workshop, mainly that of shoe-makers. Employing female workforce in the shoe-making industry was more and more significant, prevailing in the time of socialist co-operative. In the period of small-scale industry professional marriage endogamy was general in dynastic footwear-producing families, a phenomenon having economic advantages.

Marrying into a family had three different forms:

- a) First-generation footwear maker, who got into the workshop of the master craftsman as apprentice and later journeyman and married one daughter of the master.

- b) It was accepted to marry the widow of the master craftsman by the younger brother, practising the same profession.
- c) The son of a second- or third-generation footwear making family married the daughter of another footwear making craftsman.

2.2.2 The period of socialist co-operative

At the formation of the socialist co-operative 90 % of the members were from the agrarian proletariat. Most of the workers at ENCI³ were from social groups lacking peasant traditions, not attached to the soil, being rather poor. The change in lifestyle and work organisation resulted in mass influx of women into the co-operative, which resulted in the high number of female employees.

Concerning professional marriage endogamy in the period of socialist co-operatives the following conclusion can be drawn: the number of marriages between skilled labourers was high.

When comparing the developmental index of shoe- and boot-making crafts we can see the tremendous growth concerning the significance of shoe-making industry in the 20th century. There are several reasons for that:

- a) modernisation of production technology
- b) following the changes in fashion trends
- c) creating a wide-scale social clientele
- d) employing female workforce

3.3 Typographic analysis of footwear-making workshops in Endrőd and the changes of work place in the workshops

The spatial study of the workshops' position showed that the greater entrepreneurial workshops become concentrated in the centre of the settlement (Apponyi Street and the side streets opening from this street). Workshops with one person or craftsmen without workshop pursued their profession in the periphery (Gyomavég – dwelling place for poor families and Zrínyi Street).

³ Endrődi Cipész Szövetkezet: Co-operative of Shoemakers in Endrőd.

After the study of work place it can be stated that three different forms of workshops emerged in the settlement:

- a) workshop without a workshop, in which case the footwear-making person set up the workbench in the dwelling room, changing its position subordinated to the changes of light and the arrangement of furniture
- b) workshop, attached to the dwelling house or created from one of its back rooms (e.g. stable, pantry)
- c) workshop in an independent building

With the disappearance of independent footwear-producing workshops, the centre of footwear-making was shifted into the Bank building (situated at the meeting point of Apponyi and Main Street) and later into the building of the co-operative, standing opposite to the latter. The socialist co-operative later moved to the industrial establishment, at the outskirts of the village, where the hall of the shoe factory was constructed.

Analysing the work place of workshops, founded after the change of regime is not effective as they show irregular position. They are situated at different isolated points of the town, in most of the cases they are workshops, developed in dwelling houses.

Work organisation in the case of small business is similar to that of small-scale industry, preceding socialist industry. The workshop, work system and marketing forms of this period also conform to the period of small-scale industry.

3.4 Changes in marketing of products

The process of getting the ready product to the customer characterises the footwear trade till the period of co-operatives. At the beginning boot-makers and shoe-makers themselves were the ones selling the product. By change of work organisation forms, from the mid-20th century selling came out of the hands of craftsmen. The marketing of footwear became an independent branch in the co-operative, and this is true for the period of small business too. The appropriate exploitation of the strong connection between production and trade was recognized by entrepreneurs of solid capital and they participate in shoe trade besides production. The small business, based on dynastic traditions can resist the most successfully the destructive effects of market movements. Knowledge of

craftsmanship and experience have often helped them through economically difficult periods.

3.5 Boot-making based on handicraft tradition at the turn of the 20th-21st centuries in Hungary (Gyomaendrőd)

The boot-making craft has not been able to change the mechanism of production, so it has not become competitive. Due to the old production method, rooted in the guild period, the profession ceased to exist in the 1960s. The craft seemed to totally disappear, but the demands of a new clientele revitalized boot-making.

The Marsi-workshop in Gyomaendrőd recognized the demands of the reviving clientele and renewed the craft. In accordance with the new expectations it introduced technological innovations, changed the method of production and started an entirely new method of marketing. The boot-making in the time of small business is very similar to that of small-scale industry. The altered material and changes on the basis of expectations of use created a marketable product. Customers do not buy the boots for a year but want a lasting, comfortable pair of boots and shoes which last for several years. The financial background of this clientele influences the development, survival or disappearance of the boot- and shoe-industry, built on traditional technology.

4 Publications, written in the main topic of the dissertation

1. Szonda István: Inas, segéd, mester (Iparos tanoncképzés az endrődi csizmadia iparban)
ETHNICA, In: Ujváry Zoltán (szerk.), Debrecen, 2005.
V. évfolyam, 3. szám, 96-99.p.
2. Szonda István: Az endrődi csizmadiák és cipészek (1873-2000.)
RÁLÁTÁS, In: Dankó Imre (szerk.), Zsáka, 2005.
VI. évfolyam, 3. szám, 18-26.p.
3. Batári Zsuzsanna-Szonda István: „Új a csizmám nyalka”
HÁZ ÉS EMBER, In: Füzes Endre-Cseri Miklós (szerk.), Szentendre, 2005.
18. évfolyam, 221-241.
4. Szonda István: Az Endrődi Tájház és Helytörténeti Gyűjtemény
MAGYAR MÚZEUMOK. In: Selmeczi Kovács Attila (főszerk.), Budapest, 2006.
XII. évf. 3. sz. 42-45.p.
5. Szonda István: Endrődi Tájház és Helytörténeti Gyűjtemény (ismertető)
Gyomaendrőd, 2004. 15.p.
6. Szonda István: A néprajzi táborok szerepe a kisgyűjtemények életében
ETHNICA, In: Ujváry Zoltán (szerk.), Debrecen, 2007. IX. évf. 1. sz. 31-33.p.
7. Szonda István: Tapasztalatok és gondolatok a felvidéki mezőváros, tállyai házában
elhelyezett csizmadia műhely berendezése kapcsán
TÉKA, In: Bereczki Ibolya (szerk.), Szentendre, 2008. (megjelenés alatt)
8. Szonda István: Társadalmi struktúrák az endrődi lábbelikészítő kisiparban a XX.
század első feléig.
Damjanich János Múzeum Évkönyve. In: Horváth László (szerk.), Szolnok, 2009.
(megjelenés alatt)